

WASHINGTON. D.C. – House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Ranking Member Darrell Issa (R-CA) issued the following statement regarding today's health care summit in which President Obama singlehandedly spoke more than all the Republican participants combined:

"While today may have been good theater, inviting Republicans over so they can just listen to one person talk is hardly bipartisanship in motion. To be clear, Republicans are just as eager to advance proposals that will address portability, pre-existing conditions and access of quality health care. I believe all Americans should have access to the same benefits that Members of Congress receive which is why I introduced H.R. 3438, the Access to Insurance for All Americans Act.

"The suggestion that enacting true tort reform would not result in health care cost savings is just not true. The CBO has said that enacting tort reform would reduce total national health care spending by billions of dollars. In 2009, the CBO estimated that tort reform would reduce mandatory spending for Medicare, Medicaid, SCHIP and the FEHBP by roughly \$41 billion over the next 10 years and could yield an increase in federal tax revenue by as much as \$13 billion for a total estimated savings of \$54 billion over 10 years – compare that to the President's own proposal that would reduce the deficit by only \$100 billion by 2020."

[Click here to read the Oversight Republican report, The Failure to Address the Costs of Defensive Medicine in Health Care Legislation, detailing the true costs of defensive medicine and the cost-reduction tort reform would bring.](#)

Facts about Tort Reform:

- In 2003, HHS found that malpractice coverage and defensive medicine costs result in as much as **\$56 billion a year** to the government
- A 2008 study by PriceWaterHouseCoopers found that defensive medicine is the top area of wasteful spending in health care – **accounting for \$210 billion annually.**
- **Nearly half** of all medical malpractice claims do not involve injury or medical error
- **Less than 15 cents** of every litigation-related dollar actually goes to those injured from medical negligence.

Look at states that have at the very least, medical liability caps:

- Since 1975, premiums nationwide have increased 420%, as opposed to just 168% in California.

- Prior to the passage of tort reform in Texas, one in four doctors faced a medical malpractice claim every year.

- In 2005, the Georgia legislature passed comprehensive medical liability reform that included \$250,000 caps on punitive damages and \$350,000 caps on noneconomic damages. Since then, the average number of medical malpractice claims has decreased by 39%, from over 1,128 in 2004 to 683 in 2008.

- More expensive litigation means fewer doctors, and fewer doctors means reduced access to medical care for everybody. New Jersey, for instance, will be short 2,800 family doctors and specialists by the year 2020, according to a report released this year by the New Jersey Council on Teaching Hospitals. The reason for the shortage, according to Council President Richard Goldstein, is a “morale problem” associated with the state’s “hostile” environment for doctors and the heightened threat of malpractice lawsuits.

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